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IMPROVEMENT OF YUGOSLAV AVIATION ORGANIZATIONS

Radoslav Radosavljevic

The secretaries of all republic councils attended a conference in Ruma from 21 to 25 November 1950. In addition to reporting on the situation and work of aviation organizations in their respective republics, they discussed the future development of these organizations and the work for 1951.

At present, the Yugoslav Aviation Association is composed of approximately 200 aviation clubs with over 50,000 members. Serbia has the largest membership with about 18,000 members, and Macedonia is second with 5,000. Croatia has the smallest number of members.

In 1950, 9 airfields with hangars were built in Serbia, 7 in Croatia, 5 in Slovenia, 4 in Macedonia, and 3 in Montenegro. Little construction was done in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but special attention will be given to such work in 1951.

Over 8,000 members have been trained in 85 model-aircraft, glider, parachute, and pilot schools. However, the increase in trained personnel was quantitative rather than qualitative. Accordingly, the job for 1951 is to improve personnel qualitatively so that they can respond at any time to a call from the people or the party to defend Yugoslavia.

During the first years, aviation groups had more than enough technical facilities and flying craft, but lagged in organization, activities, and technical personnel. Later, however, and especially in 1950, when aviation clubs increased 25 percent over 1949 and membership increased more than 250 percent, Yugoslavia reached a balance between needs and technical facilities available. The pronounced trend toward expansion is reversing this situation, for requirements are not exceeding facilities.

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The administrators of the Yugoslav Aviation Association anticipated this expansion and, as early as the beginning of 1950, started constructing airfields, hangars, and large workshops for the building and repair of aircraft. At present, there are six such shops; this number will be doubled in 1951. Moreover, small workshops are being set up at every airfield that has glider and pilot schools.

Good results have been achieved in propaganda and publicity. More than half a million visitors attended eight large meets. In addition, several dozen small meets and air shows were arranged for the rural population. Several hundred lectures, exhibits, and similar planned activities furnished more information and publicity.

Aviation groups and their members helped in the premilitary education of the people and youth. Furthermore, the work in premilitary training was always successful when cooperation was established between aviation groups and people's organizations. With more cooperation, especially with the Association of Fighters [Veterans?] even better results could be achieved.

The main aviation sports events of 1950 were eight federal and international meets. Republic and aviation clubs held many meets; 24 new records were set for Yugoslavia. Glider pilots won six gold and 43 silver "C" awards.

Many proposals have been submitted for improving the Yugoslav Aviation Association. The majority of these proposals are to be submitted for discussion and adoption to the Sixth Plenum of the Yugoslav Aviation Association, which is to meet in February 1951.

In line with government and party policy to decentralize and democratize Yugoslav organizations, all functions of the Federal Council are to be transferred to republic administration. The executive councils of the aviation associations in the republics will be in charge of over-all supervision. The professional personnel of the federal and republic secretariats of the federal and republic councils will be reduced to a minimum. Plans have been made to activate republic executive councils to the fullest extent. Executive councils are to become administrative councils, and not the honorary groups they have been heretofore. The executive councils in Macedonia, and to some extent in Serbia, are examples of good administration. Consequently, it was decided to expand and strengthen existing executive councils, and to cooperate more closely with people's organizations, especially with the Association of Fighters.

Closely related to this is the problem of strengthening the administrations of aviation clubs and making them more independent. Each administration should administer its over-all work, and the republic council should assist and supervise. The work in the clubs should be divided by sections, with the most active and efficient members selected as administrators. Such selections should be made by secret ballot at meetings or section conferences.

Aviation clubs may now be organized in every locality where there is sufficient interest to warrant it, contrary to former regulations which provided that they be organized only on a territorial basis. The problem of coordinating and supervising the work of the many aviation clubs in big cities by republic councils will disappear after the establishment of republic aviation centers to coordinate the work of the airfield schools.

It will be suggested to the Sixth Plenary Session that special commissions be established for all branches of aviation work, such as commissions for model aircraft, gliders, parachuting, engine aircraft, aviation technology, and air sports. Federal and republic commissions would be established for each branch.

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Existing federal centers and schools would be subordinated to their respective commissions. Each commission would have three to seven members, and meet as often as necessary. At least once a year, a commission would hold a conference of leading experts to discuss work accomplished and plans for further development. Each commission head would be selected at the plenary session of his branch, and would also be a member of the executive council.

To encourage further activity and development in the field of model aircraft, which is lagging, it has been suggested that clubs be established, devoted exclusively to model aircraft. This means that in the large clubs which have developed other activities but have relegated model aircraft to a routine activity which is not properly understood, model-aircraft enthusiasts would be authorized to organize their own clubs by converting model-aircraft sections into independent clubs. This measure could not be adopted earlier, but the expansion and development of the aviation organization makes it not only possible but necessary. This applies exclusively to model aircraft; no need for reorganization is necessary in other branches since they are closely connected with each other in work on the airfield, flying, etc., and have similar work methods.

To make the model-aircraft branch more attractive and interesting, it is proposed to abolish the present A and B model aircraft courses, and retain only sport badges for successful achievements. Model aircraft work should be conducted in groups, centers, workshops, seminars, individually, etc. Special attention should be given to the problem of practical work, model-aircraft flying, and competition in this field.

Another unresolved problem of much importance is the problem of organizing republic aviation centers to coordinate activities on airfields where there are glider, parachute, and pilot schools. This problem applies mainly to the large cities. The proposed centers have nothing in common with the former republic gliding centers of 1947 and 1948. These are now Class I glider schools.

A republic aviation center as proposed would have glider, parachute, and pilot schools. The administrators of the schools, a rear-zone commander and an aviation-center commander, would be the headquarters staff. The aviation-center commander would also be a member of the executive council and the second secretary of the association. The administrators would also be members of the respective republic commissions. Flying, technical services, transport, fuel, lubricating supplies, etc., would be centralized. Airfields and facilities would be centralized in large cities and all aviation clubs in the cities would have equal rights and opportunities to use the airfields concerned. Individual technical services and workshops would no longer be needed for each school, since these services and shops would be united in a service in the rear zone. Fuel and lubricants would be issued and accounted for at a central location, and not at three separate locations as previously done.

The proposed reorganization of the gliding branch by training in two-place gliders, abolishing training courses A, B, and C, and giving training in steps I and II [First and second phases of training?] would contribute to the rapid quantitative and qualitative improvement of training and gliding.

The quality of training and further education of personnel are more important in the parachute branch than in any other. In 1951, the emphasis will be on quality training. Several thousand parachutists have been trained, but they have tended to get confused and not see their development as parachutists in perspective. The Parachute Command, which recently underwent a considerable reorganization in personnel, is going to revise training plans and programs.

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Parachute fields in aviation clubs should make a further contribution to the development of the parachute branch. Established on airfields, or in any other locality, they would be equipped with parachute swings, parachute towers, parachutes, etc. Parachute trainees would spend their free time on these fields in training which would contribute to their further development as parachutists.

In the field of powered aviation the emphasis in 1951 will also be on quality training. More than ever before, emphasis will be placed on special training like blind flying, air acrobatics, etc. Existing republic pilot schools will be expanded. Yugoslav youth will come out of these training schools as graduate pilots, and not as undergraduates who have completed only the first phase of training as has been done in the past.

The planning and reporting system is to be reorganized and operations reduced to a minimum. In most cases, planning is to be turned over to the republics and aviation clubs.

The problem of economy was given special attention at the conference. Most of the preceding proposals will contribute to economical operation by saving several million dinars annually. To date, aviation organizations have not operated economically. Aircraft and technical facilities were not properly maintained. Little attention was given to obtaining revenues. For instance, membership dues were paid irregularly, and most of the competitions, meets, and propaganda flights were on a free-admission basis. Admission charges were not always collected at demonstrations. The hay from airfields was not sufficiently utilized, if at all. No evening meets or other types of agitation and propaganda activities, which are advantageous as sources of revenue, were held.

It was established at the conference that there are several ways to make aviation organizations financially self-supporting. The decision was made to charge admission to all demonstrations, competitions, propaganda flights, etc., and collect membership dues regularly. Out of membership dues, 70 percent would be allotted to the aviation club, 20 percent to the republic council, and 10 percent to the federal council. Net income from demonstrations, meets, and other activities organized by aviation clubs would be allotted as follows: 40 percent to the republic council and the balance to the club concerned. From net income realized from similar activities [not organized by aviation clubs?], the federal council will receive 40 percent and the republic council the balance. Payment will be exacted for all aviation insignia, which will reduce subsidy by several hundred thousand dinars.

The conference was very successful, in general, and conferees agreed to carry out all the above proposals, subject to the approval of the Sixth Plenum of the federal council of the Yugoslav Aviation Council.

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